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CALIFORNIA-NEVADA TAHOE BASIN FIRE COMMISSION



Nevada State Capitol
101 North Carson Street
Carson City, NV 89701

NOTICE OF PUBLIC MEETING

Thursday, February 7, 2008

**Community Fire Safety Committee (9:00 a.m.),
Wildland Fuels Committee (9:00 a.m.), and
Legislative and Funding Policy Committee (4:00 p.m.)
Sierra Nevada College
999 Lake Tahoe Boulevard, Incline Village, Nevada
(Committees' Notice/Agenda and meeting location on pages 3-9)**

Friday, February 8, 2008, 9:00 a.m.

**Commission Meeting
Sierra Nevada College,
999 Lake Tahoe Boulevard, TCEF Rooms 139 and 141
Incline Village, Nevada**

AGENDA

(Action may be taken on those items denoted "Action")

Public comment may be limited to three minutes per person at the discretion of the Co-Chairs. Times listed are estimates provided for planning purposes only. Items may be taken out of order and may take more or less time than indicated.

1. Call to Order and Roll Call
2. Discussion and Adoption of Minutes – **Action**
 - A. January 15, 2008
 - B. January 25, 2008
3. Staff Report – **Discussion/Action**
 - A. Status of Proposed Findings and Recommendations
 - B. Remaining meetings.
 - C. Amendment to Commission By Laws regarding Committees

The Commission will consider action, and may adopt an amendment to its By Laws, to allow from 1 to 3 Commission members on the Wildland Fuels Committee to serve as alternates for the Community Safety Committee, and 1 to 3 Commission members on the Community Safety Committee to serve as alternates for the Wildland Fuels Committee, and, if the amendment is adopted, to identify the Commission members who will serve as committee alternates.

4. Report by Brett Storey, Placer County Executive Office, on the Tahoe Basin Biomass Facility Feasibility Assessment. – **Discussion**

5. Committee Reports

NOTE: All Proposed Findings and Recommendations (F&Rs) are available at the Commission's website: <http://resources.ca.gov/TahoeFireCommission/findings.html>

- A. Wildland Fuels Committee Report – **Discussion/Action**

1. The committee will orally report what items are being forwarded to the Commission to be agendaized at the next Commission meeting.-- **Discussion/Action**
 2. Other issues– **Discussion**

- B. Community Fire Safety Committee Report – **Discussion/Action**

1. The committee will orally report what items are being forwarded to the Commission to be agendaized at the next Commission meeting.-- **Discussion/Action**
 2. Other issues– **Discussion**

- C. Legislative and Funding Policy Committee Report – **Discussion/Action**

1. The committee will orally report what items are being forwarded to the Commission to be agendaized at the next Commission meeting.-- **Discussion/Action**
 2. Other issues– **Discussion**

6. Working Groups Report – **Discussion/Action**

7. Public Comment – **Discussion**

8. Adjournment – **Action**

A. Community Fire Safety Committee – 9:00 a.m. (TCEF - Room 139)

1. Call to Order
 - a. Roll Call
2. Review of previous actions taken – **Discussion/Action**

The committee will review all previous actions taken at January 24 and 25 Committee and Commission meetings and will discuss any requests from committee members to take further action on topics discussed.
3. Water Systems in the Tahoe Basin - **Discussion/Action**

Presentation from the Association of Water Purveyors.

Break (15 minutes)

4. Review of proposed findings/recommendations - **Discussion/Action**

NOTE: All Proposed F&Rs are available at the Commission's website:
<http://resources.ca.gov/TahoeFireCommission/findings.html>

- a. V-010 – Permit Streamlining – proposed findings regarding overlapping permitting system in the Tahoe Basin affecting defensible space and recommendations to streamline the permitting process.
- b. V-011 – Level of Protection – a proposed finding relating to “closest forces” dispatching response policy and a proposal to recommend the Governors of the State of Nevada and California direct that a permanent interagency (federal, state & local) resolution to this dispatching issue be developed and implemented prior to the 2008 wildfire season.

Lunch Break

4. Review of proposed findings/recommendations - **continued - Discussion/Action**
 - c. V-013 – Education – proposed findings relating to methods of fire safety education in the Tahoe Basin and recommendations for the development of fire safety educational videos.
 - d. V-014 – Education - proposed finding relating to methods of fire safety education in the Tahoe Basin and recommendations for the analysis of video tool kits of the Tahoe region Fire Marshals.
 - e. V-017 – Defensible Space – proposed findings regarding prescriptions for defensible space and erosion control and Best Management Practices (BMPs) and proposed recommendations regarding defensible space, fire behavior, erosion control, inconsistencies and BMPs.
5. Committee Coordination - **Discussion**

Review of new proposed Findings and Recommendations that have been submitted through the process adopted by the Commission at the December 14 meeting as assigned by committee.
LFPC = Legislation and Funding Policy Committee WFC = Wildland Fuels Committee
CFSC= Community Fire Safety Committee

Break (15 minutes)

6. Public Comments **(30 minutes)**

The sub-committee will hear comments from the public. Public comments will be limited to 3 minutes per person with a maximum of 30 minutes. Public comment cards will be accepted and called upon in the order received.

7. Findings and Recommendations - **Discussion/Action**

The committee members may make findings and recommendations regarding the subject matters discussed and may take action on recommendations to the Commission. The committee may also identify key performance measures and develop due dates for future work.

8. Adjournment

Items not completed will be tabled for a future agenda.

B. Wildland Fuels Committee – 9:00 a.m. (TCEF – Room 141)

1. Call to Order
 - a. Roll call
 - b. Review and approval of minutes – **Action**
 - c. Review agenda including adjournment time – **Discussion**
2. Consideration of the following Proposed Findings and associated Recommendations.
(Discussion/Action)

NOTE: All Proposed F&Rs are available at the Commission's website:
<http://resources.ca.gov/TahoeFireCommission/findings.html>

Catastrophic Fire

- a. F&R V-007: CATASTROPHIC FIRE: The risk of wildfire in the Tahoe Basin is extreme and the probability of catastrophic fire occurrence is increasing.- **(Discussion/Action)**

Air Quality

- b. F&R V-024 - "Lack of Comprehensive Air Quality Information": There is a lack of comprehensive air quality and meteorological information within the Lake Tahoe Basin to analyze air quality conditions to optimize burn windows for prescribed fire activities. - **Discussion/Action**
- c. F&R V-025 - Atmospheric conditions and air quality determine the amount of burning that can be done on a given day. - **Discussion/Action**
- d. F&R V-026 - "Air Quality Public Information": There is no comprehensive public information for the Lake Tahoe Basin for Fuels Treatment, Prescribed Burning, Smoke Management, and Public Health. - **Discussion/Action**
- e. F&R V-028 - Nevada does not regulate burn and no burn days, rather it is left to the land managers' discretion to ignite prescribed fires only when conditions are acceptable. This allows land managers greater flexibility to effectively and efficiently reduce forest fuels within their jurisdictions. - **Discussion/Action**

Biomass, and Fuels Treatments

- f. F&R V-001 - FUELS TREATMENT COORDINATION: A common method is needed to prioritize and coordinate fuels treatment work across ownership boundaries. **Discussion/Action**
- g. F&R V-021 - The MAC plan established a ten year plan to address fire issues in the Tahoe Basin. It does not, however, establish clear priorities, largely due to funding concerns. It is axiomatic that the easiest project to fund is one that faces the least bureaucratic and regulatory hurdles and is ready to go. **Discussion/Action**
- h. F&R V-032 - "FUELS REDUCTION" Fuels reduction projects incorporating tree thinning and biomass removal are effective in the modification of fire behavior. **Discussion/Action**
- i. F&R V-035 - TRPA ordinance prohibits the use of heavy equipment on slopes greater than 30%. This regulation discourages fuel reduction work on steeper slopes by requiring the use of very expensive methods (helicopter), harvesting methods generally not readily available in the Basin (cable systems), or harvesting methods that are expensive, inefficient and not always capable of completely meeting fuel reduction goals (hand crews).- **(Discussion/Action)**
- j. F&R V-033 - "HAZARDOUS FUELS ON STEEP SLOPES": Hazardous fuels exist on slopes greater than 30%. Technologies other than hand removal exist to treat these hazardous fuels. - **Discussion/Action**

- k. F&R V-016: - "FOREST MANAGEMENT: Forest thinning and the institution of healthy forest management and maintenance practices are essential to restoring health to Lake Tahoe's forests in order to protect against the hazards of catastrophic fires. Short-term solutions, coupled with long-term programs, must be accepted and implemented without delay in order to prevent long-term devastating impacts on the Lake and its residents that catastrophic wildfires would create." - **Discussion/Action**
- l. F&R V-029 - BIOMASS: Woody biomass processing is an essential component of restoring healthy forest conditions, reducing the severity and intensity of future wildfires, lowering air & water pollution, and managing greenhouse gas reduction in the Tahoe Basin. **Discussion/Action**

Access, Funding, Monitoring

- m. F&R V-012 - TEMPORARY ROADS: To effectively and efficiently implement forest health and fuels reduction treatments throughout the Lake Tahoe Basin, temporary road access for mechanized harvesting equipment is critically necessary. - **Discussion/Action**
- n. F&R V-020 - PROJECT FUNDING: The current system of funding proposed projects is structured in such a way as to discourage cooperative and collaborative decision making. **(Discussion/Action)**
- o. F&R V-015 - PROJECT MONITORING: The imposition of comprehensive project monitoring as a project condition upon individual contractors and agencies performing fire risk reduction projects reduces both project performance and the application of adaptive management science for the protection of the Tahoe Basin environment. - **Discussion/Action**

Permit Streamlining and SEZ'S

- p. F&R V-005 - CONFLICTING LAWS & REGULATIONS: Numerous conflicting land management and environmental laws and regulations impede the ability to plan and implement forest fuels reduction projects in the Lake Tahoe Basin. - **Discussion/Action**
- q. F&R V-037 - REGULATORY COORDINATION: There is a need to improve Agency coordination and eliminate redundant regulatory roles. - **Discussion/Action**
F&R V-010 - PERMIT STREAMLINING: The existing system for getting permits to reduce fuel loads is often confusing, sometimes redundant and overly complex. - **Discussion/Action**
- r. F&R V-023 - LAHONTAN TIMBERWAIVER: The California Lahontan Regional Water Quality Control Board (Lahontan RWQCB) requirement for submittal of an Application for a Waiver of Discharge under its Timber Waiver for projects using hand crews creates additional project paperwork, additional time until project implementation, and restrictions that result in little, if any, environmental benefit. - **Discussion/Action**
- s. F&R V-036 - HAND THINNING: There is a need to reduce or eliminate permitting for hand crew work outside urban areas. - **Discussion/Action**
- t. F&R V-038 - PERMITS IN SENSITIVE HABITATS: The existing system for getting permits to reduce fuels using equipment in sensitive habitats (e.g., stream environment zones and steep slopes) is often confusing, sometimes redundant and complex. This may discourage property owners and land managers from reducing fuels in these areas, and impose unnecessary costs and delays to removing trees and vegetation. - **Discussion/Action**
- u. F&R V-039 - INCORPORATE LESSONS LEARNED: Project results and research efforts related to the environmental impacts and project effectiveness associated with fuel reduction projects are not systematically compiled and stored for easy use and readily accessible. The opportunity to incorporate "lessons learned" is frequently missed. - **Discussion/Action**
- v. F&R V-040 - UPDATE REGIONAL PLANS: Regional plans and policies need to be updated to acknowledge the importance of fuel reduction efforts and facilitate implementation of these efforts. - **Discussion/Action**

- w. F&R V-022 - The lack of clarity as to what constitutes a stream environment zone and the conflicting interpretations by the various agencies as to whether an area is a SEZ has led to confusion among property owners and contractors trying to clear stream environment zones of hazardous fuels materials and has therefore discouraged such activities. - **Discussion/Action**
- x. F&R V-041 - DELINEATING SEZ'S: There is a need to facilitate project planning in SEZs. - **Discussion/Action**
- y. F&R V-042 - CENTRALIZE RESEARCH EFFORTS: There is a need to centralize research efforts - **Discussion/Action**
- z. F&R V-027 - Low emission fuel reduction techniques are part of the necessary tools needed to minimize health-based air quality issues and visibility impacts when reducing the fuel load. - **Discussion/Action**
- aa. F&R V-008: PRESCRIBED FIRE: Prescribed fire must be promoted and increasingly employed in the Lake Tahoe Basin as a fuel reduction tool. - **Discussion/Action**

3. Other Findings and Recommendations. - **Discussion**

4. Public Comments - **Discussion**

The committee will hear comments from the public. Public comments will be limited to 3 minutes per person with a maximum of 30 minutes. Public comment cards will be accepted and called upon in the order received.

5. Adjournment - **Action**

Items not completed will be tabled for future agenda.

C. Legislative and Funding Policy Committee – 4:00 p.m. (TCEF – Room 119)

1. Call to Order

Roll call

Review and approval of minutes - **Action**

Review of Agenda - **Discussion**

2. Consideration of the following Proposed Findings and associated Recommendations - Discussion/Action

NOTE: All Proposed F&Rs are available at the Commission's website:

<http://resources.ca.gov/TahoeFireCommission/findings.html>

- a. F&R V-043 - EMERGENCY DECLARATION: Lake Tahoe is in need of urgent fire mitigation actions across a wide spectrum of fire suppression, economic, fuels management, planning and regulatory streamlining improvements. Both State and Federal Emergency Declarations will assist in providing all possible solutions as rapidly as possible to protect the public safety and environment of Lake Tahoe, without sacrificing necessary environmental protections. - **Discussion/Action**
- b. F&R V-002 - CONTINUITY PLAN: A mechanism should be established to ensure that the Governor's approved recommendations from the Commission be implemented and maintained over time." - **Discussion/Action**
- c. F&R V-003 - INADEQUATE FUNDING: Funding for forest health & fire suppression for Lake Tahoe Basin is insufficient and a long-term, stable source of funds is needed." - **Discussion/Action**
- d. F&R V-044 - INADEQUATE FUNDING: Public agencies have proposed to reduce fuel hazards and restore forests on approximately 68,000 acres over the next 10 years at an estimated cost of approximately \$230 million. Sufficient funding sources have not been identified that can commit funds to increase capacity (staff, consultants, contractors) to plan and implement projects. - **Discussion/Action**
- e. F&R V-016 - "FOREST MANAGEMENT: Forest thinning and the institution of healthy forest management and maintenance practices are essential to restoring health to Lake Tahoe's forests in order to protect against the hazards of catastrophic fires. Short-term solutions, coupled with long-term programs, must be accepted and implemented without delay in order to prevent long-term devastating impacts on the Lake and its residents that catastrophic wildfires would create." - **Discussion/Action**
- f. F&R V-018 - "TRPA ORDINANCES: Although TRPA ordinances and standards have been adopted in accordance with NEPA and /or CEQA standards, they have not been adopted with a view towards the mitigation of catastrophic fire risks. As a result, a number of requirements and standards have been imposed within the Tahoe Basin for environmental purposes but without consideration for fire hazards." - **Discussion/Action**
- g. F&R V-019 - "TRPA BOARD COMPOSITION: There is presently no requirement for experienced fire professionals to be represented on either the Governing Board or the Advisory Planning Commission of the TRPA. Absent such requirements, there is a need to make the TRPA and other regulatory agencies within the Tahoe Basin more responsive to public safety and the prevention of catastrophic fires within the Basin, and to assure continued attention to these matters by the TRPA." - **Discussion/Action**
- h. F&R V-034 - MOU REVISIONS: The Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) between the USDA Forest Service (FS) and the Tahoe Regional Planning Agency (TRPA) creates unnecessary and unintended barriers to efficient planning and accomplishment of fuels management projects. Likewise the MOU between the FS and Lahontan Regional Water Quality Control Board (LRWQCB), while more recent than the TRPA MOU, may have sections that inadvertently impair efficient implementation of fuels reduction projects. **Discussion/Action**

3. Other Findings and Recommendations. - Discussion

- a. Discuss possible development of an F&R regarding a requirement for the Lahontan Regional Water Quality Control Board to receive approval of the Tahoe Regional Planning Agency Governing Board prior to enactment of new regulations and/or revised interpretations of existing regulations.
- b. Discuss possible development of an F&R regarding economic analysis related to projects in the Wildland-Urban Interface (WUI).

4. Public Comments - Discussion

The sub-committee will hear comments from the public. Public comments will be limited to 3 minutes per person with a maximum of 30 minutes. Public comment cards will be accepted and called upon in the

5. Adjournment - Action

Items not completed will be tabled for future agenda.

This notice has been posted on the California Resources Agency Web site at <http://resources.ca.gov/TahoeFireCommission/> and has been posted on or before 9 a.m. on the third working day before the meeting at the following locations:

Sierra Nevada College
999 Lake Tahoe Boulevard
Incline Village, NV

Nevada State Capitol Building
101 North Carson Street
Carson City, NV 89701

Nevada Department of Conservation & Natural Resources
901 South Stewart Street, Richard H. Bryan Building
Carson City, NV 89701-5244

Nevada Legislative Building
401 South Carson Street
Carson City, NV 89701

Copies of the written materials will be made available to the public at the meeting location at the Sierra Nevada College, 999 Lake Tahoe Boulevard, Incline Village, Nevada.

For information or documents (as indicated below) concerning the Commission meeting, please contact Dana Cole, Commission Staff Liaison, (916) 327-9631 or Dana.Cole@resources.ca.gov

Any written reports being provided to the Commission members in advance of the public meeting will also be available to the public upon request; and,

In accordance with Title II of the Americans With Disabilities Act of 1990, reasonable accommodations are available. Requests for reasonable accommodations should be made at least five working days prior to the meeting date. To request reasonable accommodations, including documents in alternative formats, please contact: Dana Cole, Commission Staff Liaison

